

CHARLES GLINES

Tape 178

Interviewers: Lapoint 6th Grade Class, April 1987.

Transcribed: June 2001, by Janet Taylor, Uintah County Library Regional History Center.

Tony Holt is conducting an interview about cars:

Tony (TH): Please describe how cars looked in the olden days.

Charles Glines (Chuck): Tony, I'm Uncle Chuck. I'm glad to help you with this recording. I'm glad to give you some information. I've lived a long time and I've worked on a lot of cars. And so, I'm going to show you a picture, Tony. That's the nearest to the first car we ever had. You notice it has a cloth top on it, and notice the wheels. They are what they called "wood spokes" in those days. This one here is a 1911 model. That is a 1912 model. That means it's about seventy-five years old, if you had a car like that. That's a very nice picture, but our Model-T Ford was a 1919. Us Glineses lived in a log house down the road here a ways and finally my two older brothers, Joe and Harv, went to Vernal, and while they were over there they found a pretty nice, used, second-hand Model-T Ford. It had something wrong with the steering, and nobody seemed to know how to fix it, but other than that, it ran really well. And they gave \$190 for it. They went to the bank and borrowed the money, borrowed \$200. The ten dollars extra that they had left they put in the gas tank so they'd have a way to come home. They brought the car home. It was wonderful for us to have a car. We were used to riding in buggies and wagons and on horses when we wanted to go places.

This car was really something that I really was interested in. I've always liked mechanics and automobiles and one time when we were riding in this car, as we went to Vernal, we were going down into Maeser, and my older brother was driving the car and we were enjoying it so wonderfully that my older brother said, "It's too bad that Pa couldn't have lived to enjoy this car with us."

Now I'll stop a moment and if you can think of some more questions to ask, we'll go ahead.

TH: What kind of cars did your family have? Describe the car, please.

Chuck: Is that number two question, Tony?

TH: Oh, yes. How much did they cost? Was it a lot of money?

Chuck: Tony, in those days it was quite a bit like it is now-days. This special car that you can see on page number two right there, that car there cost about \$800. Now, that's a lot less, what they cost in those days, but the same kind of car now-days would cost probably \$8,000. But according

to the times and the wages that men made and what men make now-days, it sort of off-sets it, so you could say that the car for \$800 was just as good a buy as it is now-days.

I was talking to David Small. Before he died, he had a 1951 Chevrolet pickup. He drove that for a number of years. So, many years ago, when prices really came up, David Small said, "Prices haven't changed much." Even though it was two or three times what it had used to be. David said, "I gave four of my choice Hereford cattle to buy the first Chevrolet pickup I ever had. Just the other day, I sold four of my Hereford cattle to buy me a brand-new pickup, which was around \$8,000." The price of cows had come up when the price of cars had come up, and he said it was about the same. But a lot of us didn't have cows that we could sell and get about \$8,000 for them. Not the kind of cattle he sold. OK, Tony, let's talk about number three.

TH: What kind of cars did your family have? Describe the car.

Chuck: Well, like I told you once before, it was kind of something like what you see there, only it had two seats in it. Now, look at this one here, Tony, and you know that the headlights are right up just next to the windshield and what they were then was just a kerosene lamp. They put kerosene in them and took a match and lit them and that's what kind of light this antique car had on it. But as the time went on, with the 1919 Model T Ford, the lights came from the magnetos spinning in the transmission. And that's where we got the electricity for the car to run. There were no batteries on these cars. So we called this a magneto system. The faster you drove with the car, the brighter your lights became. If you got down where your engine was running slow, the lights got kind of dim. Now it's lots different because we have a steady light because we have batteries in our cars.

TH: Please explain how you drove the car.

Chuck: Which question is that?

TH: Oh, tell me how many trips you and your family went on, in the car you had.

Chuck: This was something new to us. We just kept the car going, quite a lot. We neglected some of our farming a little bit you might say, just to take an extra ride in the car, to go to Roosevelt or to go to Vernal. When I was about fourteen years old, I took my Mom and I and we got in this Model T Ford and we got out to Provo Bench, out there where there was fruit. We got us a job picking raspberries. We picked raspberries and we bought some raspberries and we bottled the raspberries and we put them in this old car and we came back home.

Now this type of a transmission was different, too. You put your left foot on a pedal, and when you did that you pushed the pedal down and it threw the car out of high gear and threw it into low gear. Every time you went up a hill that was too steep for the car to go up in high gear, you'd put your foot on the low-gear pedal and you'd gradually keep going up the hill. In fact, it was a kind of slow traveling car. This was quite slow, this car was. It had three pedals. It had low gear and a pedal for the low gear, and then when you left your low gear partway up that was neutral, and when you let it all the way up that was high gear. Then you'd have to put it in neutral and the middle pedal you'd have to step on for reverse. And the third pedal to the right

you'd step on with your right foot, for the brake.

Now, this was quite a wonderful transmission in that old Model T Ford. There was never any other car that had a transmission like the Model T Ford, and it was well accepted by the public. Everyone who had gotten acquainted with them used to say, "I can fix up the Model T Ford. I can keep it going." One man that I knew did a lot of driving, did a lot of traveling, around through the hills and around in the mountains and he had a Model T Ford. Finally, he sold that Model T Ford and got a 1926 model Chevrolet with one of these cloth top affairs, and two seats in it. He had a little trouble with his Chevrolet and he said, "I don't know how to fix it like I used to fix the Model T Fords."

The Model T was, I believe, the most popular car and the most liked of any car that I really know of. But they were slow. You could take a car with a three-speed transmission, like most of these older Chevrolets and most of the Chevs and Fords and some Plymouths, and you put them into second gear and you were just running away from a Model T going uphill in low gear. Now, what's our next one?

TH: Explain how you drove the car and what you would do if they fell apart?

Chuck: What number is that?

TH: Number five.

[Teacher]: He just explained to you how they drove them, you should ask him if they were all together when . . .

Chuck: Is that number five?

[Teacher]: Is that the one we're on?

TH: Yes.

Chuck: OK, let me tell you something about that. The old cars had no batteries. The lights came from the magnetos and the transmission, like I told you, while the engine was running. And considering the roads being so rough, the cars held up pretty well, because in those days we didn't have roads like we have now. There were only two-wheel brakes on this model of a car, this 1919 model Ford. Now-days we have four-wheel brakes.

TH: When did you learn about cars and how to drive them?

Chuck: I started in my early youth because I always wanted a car. I was about twelve years old when we first got that car. I learned from Old Man Hallett, who was a sort of a mechanic. I had already learned about adjusting brakes and what was known as "con-rods" in those days. A "con-rod" was what we used to call a connecting-rod bearing. We commonly called them "con-rods." They often wore quite fast, and they would have to be tightened up and adjusted quite a lot in those days.

TH: Were a lot of people who drove cars like we have now?

Chuck: I didn't get that one. Were people what?

TH: Were laws for people who drove cars like we have now?

Chuck: Yes, they were. Now, Tony, turn and look on page one. You can turn back and look on page one. This Buick car is forty-seven years old. Notice how it has changed from the twenty-five horse-power engine to a hundred and sixty-five horsepower engine? The roads have changed to meet the needs of the cars and besides, this one has all-wheel brakes. So the laws have changed, and are changing all the time, for more safety for drivers and better steering and brakes have really been developed from what they used to have.

TH: Explain what it was like to drive an old car.

Chuck: In those days there were new cars, you know, just the same, they were called new cars, but as we look back to old times they were old cars because they were in the olden age. New cars were being made all the time. People had new cars as well as old cars in those days, but we call them old models, you know, Tony. So, you couldn't go so fast, but now they really get out and go. Better than Model cars. You take that hundred and sixty-five horsepower engine and compare it with a twenty-five horsepower engine and you can just imagine the difference and the changes that have been made. Now, what's your next one?

TH: Describe what you did to help your dad to fix your car.

Chuck: Well, Tony, in 1908 I came along and my father died in 1911, so my dad was gone when I grew up to be the age to help to fix cars. I had to get it from someone else. Remember I mentioned Old Man Hallett there? He's the one who helped get me started. And that reminds me of a young guy by the name of Tony Holt, who was left without a father at an early age, but something wonderful happened. There came a wonderful guy who said to himself, "I'd like to be a foster-dad to Tony." And he really was.

TH: Do you think cars have changed, and how?

Chuck: Yes, I know that cars have changed a lot, and I have helped to repair them according to the needs. Now we have buses, vans, all sizes of trucks and makes, and all kinds, and these cars are not fast enough for the people now. They have taken to the air. A few years ago I took a trip to San Francisco by air, and I traveled six miles high and six hundred miles an hour. And that's not enough. Now-days people travel at unbelievable speeds into space and back again, so we'll just say that there's one thing faster. What would you think is faster than any of the speedy cars or speedy machines? Love and thought, and this is signed by your Uncle Chuck.

TH: OK, thanks.